

*A Sample of my speech  
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SOME PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF INTEGRATION

Presented by:

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For reasons which are at once quite natural and deeply psychological, man has a great need for feeling successful and superior. Possibly the long ascent up and out of the mirky mire of his pre-historic habitat justifies his pride in having arrived at his present exalted state of culture and refinement.

Although many isolated tribes of primitive and aboriginal peoples have found ways of living without our Western forms of competitive behavior, practically all groups have devised symbols for measuring their conceptions of superiority and inferiority.

At the dawn of civilization, "might made right". Some of you here today might build a good case on the fact that remnants of this antediluvian past still rule mankind in his international relations. However, with the advent of Gagarin, Titov and Glenn and the teams of scientists which put them into orbit, I believe we'd all be willing to concede that brain has eclipsed brawn in the mid-twentieth century search for truth and survival.

With our collective brains, we have achieved more wonders than even

Leonardo DaVinci, the world's greatest brain, ever conceived. The one thing which remains stubbornly resistant to progress is our innate and inordinate desires to enforce our superiority on others. So it would seem our individual urges become almost a cultural symbol of our collective needs to win.

The great psychologist, Jung, thinks this drive for superiority and power grows out of basic spiritual feelings of the helplessness and inferiority we all suffered as infants and children. We had to learn how to suppress these grandiose and omnipotent notions, so we call the process of growing out of these primitive impulses socialization or maturation.

Now I'd like to go back to 1928 to illustrate how even religious survival and superiority needs had developed into a national style.

Only a few of you older statesmen will recall the humiliating presidential campaign of 1928 when the happy warrior, Al Smith, was defeated in an ego-deflating fight, simply because he was a Catholic. I believe John F. Kennedy's victory 32 years later proved that we can change human nature -- that it is no more human to reject people than it is to accept them. But it took a lot of doing to bring about such a massive psychological change in 3 hectic decades, and I'm afraid we aren't quite finished yet with other forms of bigotry and intolerance.

How many of you remember that the National Conference of Christians and Jews was formed in 1928, as a coalition of Protestants, Catholics and Jews primarily to fight the anti-Catholic prejudice of the Al Smith campaign? That was the beginning of the Brotherhood movement in our country, and today

it includes a few more happy and unhappy warriors all trying to wage a struggle for integration. In 1962, however, the battle for Irish independence is almost won and we're focusing our attention on the Negro and our most recent target of opprobrium -- the Puerto Rican.

I'd like to suggest that one of the minor problems related to the social psychology of race relations in our nation is a semantic confusion. Each of us has a slightly different reaction to the word integration. Because the concept is so crucial a one, I should like to investigate it a moment.

To the Southern Senator at the height of his campaign, it means race mongrelization. To the Englewood mother of grade school children, it signifies school integration, which has something to do with housing and neighborhoods. To the Black Muslim, integration indicates an admission of racial inferiority -- a desire to be like whites. He rejects the concept as Uncle Tomism ... the thought of integration is anathema to his creed.

Finally, to the literate Negro, south or north, integration is no more than a long awaited symbol of his delayed dream for equality of opportunity. He does not want to pass as white or to live white; he simply wants the privilege of competing on equal terms for the rewards of a free enterprise white society.

To the extent that any aspiring citizen is barred from the God-given opportunity for self-improvement, an illiterate minority in any culture will always give vent to its justifiable frustrations leading to hostility,

aggression and sometimes even sadism. We call those sadists psychopaths or criminals.

But the self-respecting Negro and Puerto Rican does not want to move next door to you; he simply wants only to move into a decent home in a neighborhood where his children can be educated and his family live in dignity.

The more the Negro is granted his birthrights of first class citizenship, and the more self-respecting and dignified he becomes, the less will be his need to achieve a dangerously specious superiority status by marrying a white. Certainly few 20th Century Negroes follow this spurious course to attain the illusory integration which marriage brings about.

I hope this prologue on the <sup>ERSE</sup>divorce interpretations of the word "integration" and its confusing <sup>C</sup>effect on positive human relations has not been an obvious repetition of facts with which you are familiar. Since most whites in this tremendously race-sensitive period of our history carry around a bit too much diffused guilt, and not quite enough distilled truth, much of which results from misinformation, I felt this was a necessary precursor to my thoughts on the psychology of race relations in our country and city.

For the sake of appeasing our collective guilt conscience on race problems, let us then concede that we have attempted to live by the Judeo-Christian ideal of "doing unto others as we would have them do unto us", and that, gradual as our improvement may be, "every day in every way we are getting better and better".

I believe most of us in this room, without difficulty, could reproduce the progress our nation has made toward achieving equality for the Negro since the momentous Supreme Court decision on integration of May 17, 1954.

With just a modicum of research, we could point to President Kennedy's Executive Order outlawing discrimination in employment on all government contracts and subcontracts.

Being from New Jersey, we might boast about the speech our own Governor made at the annual dinner of the National Conference of Christians and Jews last Thursday at the Essex House. Certainly, no Governor in these United States has ever delivered quite so forthright a statement in favor of open occupancy private housing.

Even though everything which Jim Pawley and Neil Brown have just reported is eminently correct, it is also true that Negroes probably have greater mobility in Newark, N.J. than in any city of its size in the country.

If the cynical observer from New York City, Chicago or Philadelphia started giving us the business about Newark's race problem, we would be completely justified in telling him that Negroes live in 90% of Newark's 100 census tracts. And we might put the icing on our civic cake by letting him know that during the past 11 years, our Negro population has grown more than 100% and transition neighborhoods have increased by more than 50% without one major racial incident.

We are living in the first decade of a new era of color consciousness in our State and nation. Fifteen years ago, as we emerged from World War II, Margaret Halsey titled her best-selling book "Color Blind". It was a sort

of primer on race relations for whites who were beginning to suffer the first pangs of conscience about color and race. It was the first common sense "do it yourself" guide to assist the well-meaning white person in making his transition from demoralizing and defeating Negro phobia to a constructive consciousness of the Negro's role in a dominant and demanding white society -- who was that Negro and how did we all help to make him that way.

If we don't know what the intelligent and sophisticated Negro of today is thinking and feeling, I'm afraid we're going to be gravely alarmed tomorrow, when his words are transmitted to the Negro masses and they start doing rather than passively sitting down or sitting in-- be it in a Birmingham bus, a Roanoke restaurant, or an Englewood educational endeavor.

Therefore, as I approach my thesis after this lengthy warm-up, I'd like to suggest Eric C. Lincoln's "The Black Muslims" and James Baldwin's "Nobody Knows My Name". And while I am the first to agree that no one or two Negro authors can begin to tell us what the Negro really feels and thinks, I have a sneaking suspicion that when you're finished with these two straight-shooters, you'll have a better notion of the psycho-social picture in the Negro's mind and where he wants to go from here.

My thesis is simple: Everything we have done in the past 100 years to negate the ill effects of slavery and our treatment of the Negro in America is just not enough. Unless, with them, we start doing more today, and doing it far more quickly than yesterday, we shall run the risk of widening the dangerous gulf which in every way distinguishes white from Negro.

The cost of this rift is becoming more burdensome than our cities can

afford in social welfare and rehabilitation services. The blotch upon our international image as the paragon of democratic virtues is tragic testimony to the psychological price we are paying in the world's market place of freedom-loving peoples.

However, what I wish to do now is investigate some of the psycho-social implications of the concept of the city as a transitional way station or proving ground for the acculturation of its disadvantaged resident and in-migrant families.

I believe that most of us have outgrown the fallacy of racial inferiority which was spoon-fed to us as kids. In addition to Pawley, Ferguson, Brown and Hayes, we have met numerous Negroes who give the lie to the old wives' tale of the ignorant and lazy stereotype.

But, on the other side of the coin, we wouldn't be discussing this topic today, unless we were getting ready for an attack on the de facto inferiority of the disadvantaged Negroes and Puerto Ricans existing in our city. The important distinction is that the educational, cultural, social and economic inferiority of these kids, and their parents, is not a native inferiority. It is an imposed and implemented inferiority growing out of a life of degradation and despair.

It takes a tremendously resourceful ego to surmount the day-to-day indignities this kind of discrimination experience has given to generation of already underprivileged Negro children both north and south. We can only expect the kind of conditioning which the Negro and Puerto Rican gets in America today to nurture and create the kinds of personalities which become

delinquent at an early age . It is to the everlasting credit of the minority citizen that he is not a growing majority in our mental institutions.

Indeed, in all too many instances, this treadmill of ego-deflating inferiority becomes the reality of the Negro and Puerto Rican child's existence, and by adulthood many have actually become the slovenly, indifferent and even criminal personalities who help to fill the jails of our nation and the skidrows of our cities, thereby proving the pudding of our out-dated self-fulfilling prophecy of native white superiority over natural Negro inferiority.

But things are changing. Because the majority of us have not become actively involved in solving the American Dilemma, the angry young men and women, Negro and white, have taken up the battle cry of the Republic. Sometimes we adults are embarrassed by the radical protests of the Black Muslims, of CORE, the Congress on Racial Equality, Martin Luther King, the Freedom Bus Riders, and even the legal protests of the NAACP. But let us for a moment recall the vicious cycle which could haunt the youth for the rest of their days unless they started doing something about it today. And as we ruminate on these teenage developments in the changing psychology of the New Negro, let us be sure to remember the tortuously slow advancement since W.E.B. DuBois passed the mantle to Walter White, Thurgood Marshall, Lester Granger and company.

Our own Clyde Ferguson is to become Chief Counsel of the Federal Civil Rights Commission, not because he is an angry young man but because his life exemplifies a spirit and a hope which must have been kindled into flame at an early age.

In our understandable zeal to right the wrongs of our forefathers, the intergroup and race relations specialists of our country -- you may call us the do-gooders, if you wish -- have perpetrated a mixed blessing by the psychological methods we have used to educate the white community out of its prejudices.

While hoisting the flag of brotherhood in the face of the guilt-ridden person, these agencies of good will have plastered integration car cards in train and bus spaces. The do-gooder has mentally pounded and pummelled the apathetic citizen with his message of love. The crusader and brother-lover, in his idealistic fervor to vitiate the virus of prejudice, has too often himself assumed a vitriolic and venomous superiority attitude.

He forgets that prejudice breeds not only on economic insecurity, but also on the psychological inadequacy of the white man, and he exacerbates his confusions about himself. Our disciple of brotherly love also forgets that Moses, Confucius, Christ (and a few other solid citizens of our own generation) have tried to promote these same verities and virtues with a soft approach from the pulpits, behind ivy-covered walls and stained glass windows.

Yes, these last twenty years of billions of words of the hard brother-  
hood <sup>SELL</sup> ~~SELL~~ have not lowered the psychological price of integration on the open market. I might even suggest that in the process of making our world safe for democracy, the free enterprise capitalism lurking in many American hearts has provided more moves to all-white suburbia than the billion words of love have promoted the spiritual advantages of economic and integrated city living. Obviously, from any and all economic points of view, it makes

more sense to stay put in the old well-built home in the city than to escape to the expensive jerry-built split-level exurban trap....

Is it possible that pure economic consideration alone has to be ruled out, because as we all know, the organization man of the affluent society has added a few ingredients to his package of success symbolism. The status seekers are not about to settle for anything less than this full package. Fifty years ago, Veblen's "conspicuous consumption" was a hallmark of the nouveau riche industrialist. Today, the Cape Code or colonial dwelling in expanding suburbia symbolizes one's emancipation from the "degradation of integration", to use Bredemeir's epithet, in the commonplace city. Who imposed the degradation on whom is a question we can all answer.

Let's face it as coldly as we can: We are living in a materialistic culture. While we live in it, we are to a great extent shackled to the value structure of our friends and neighbors just as securely as we are to our own lofty ideals.

Now, if this is granted, and if it is difficult for success-motivated, upwardly mobile, rugged, individualistic whites to get ahead, then I submit that the competitive struggle for personal superiority must substitute some easily attainable symbols of success to prove we're better than the other fellow, and that the highest rewards will go to the best economic competitor and not to the warm-hearted guy who got the brotherhood award at the last church supper.

Because we have forced the median Negro to symbolize a part of society that is reprehensible to our higher standards of status, one of the simplest criteria of American achievement and fulfillment is to live where Negroes

can't live. But, of course the fascinating reverse element of this developmental schizophrenia is that most of us would not want to be caught in our tracks fleeing from Newark or any other place, to escape a Negro move-in. It is, paradoxically, fashionable to boast of our "democratic" friendships.... "Some of my best friends are Jews".... But because of another newer symbol, we don't even have to wait for that final embarrassing day of escape from the city. We have an ace in the hole: A Negative Symbol:.....

The school system has already deteriorated so markedly in transition areas that our young organization man is going to have to pull his kids out of the Carver elementary school if he wants them to make Amherst or Radcliffe. It's not that he is prejudiced, but these Negro kids who are now 70% of the Carver School are at least 1-1/2 to 2 years retarded.

It becomes apparent that as much as he philosophically favors integration across the boards, he must throw his democratic principles out the window to give his kids an education which will prepare them for their own shot at a middle class, materially oriented future.

The interesting irony of this situation is that the upwardly mobile middle-class Negro family which just moved into the Carver School district has already made the same discovery about educational retardation and is on its way out of that neighborhood unless the Board of Education does something immediately to bring Carver up to snuff.

So even though Governor Hughes wants to maintain the highest standards of the neighborhood school by integrating all housing in the State of New Jersey, thus forcing integrated housing as a precursor to integrated schools, we are still faced with many crucial questions.

What can we do in the next 50 years while we are waiting for integrated housing to take place? How can the attitudes of all Americans, Negro and white, be changed so that the inferior status of the Negro is no longer a yardstick by which the white man unconsciously symbolizes his own superior achievement?

What troubles me is that, even after admitting our progress and evaluating the work of the private and governmental agencies, we have not come appreciably closer to learning how to live together in peaceful acceptance.

But now that we and Rutgers Urban Studies Center are going to combine our forces in a joint effort to alter the devastating growing pains of the underprivileged children in our community, how can we adults start mending our own socio-psychological fences?

While Bredemeier, Gutman and Popance are preparing an all-out push to upgrade the horizons of the child's goals and aspirations, as well as his image of himself, what can we do here and now to prepare a warmer reception for him in the mainstream of the American Business and industrial community?

If the total efforts of all of us dedicated souls have resulted in more intensified segregurbia; and if our housing laws and practices are deteriorating on the suburban frontier, while our educational problems are proliferating in our urban centers -- where do we go from here?

Professor Bob Gutman will describe one new and exciting path this afternoon. In what remains of this morning, I'd like to <sup>hear</sup> ~~have~~ some of your thoughts on how we can begin to prepare our contemporaries to accept this coming generation of Puerto Rican and Negro youth. How can we get our friends and neighbors to alter their familiar customs and habits to give minority youth a fair

start in their struggle for individual self-fulfillment and group advancement?

When we discover the means of achieving this end, we shall be channeling another 30 billion dollar potential into the American economy. We shall be unleashing a great new force of productivity as well as a vast source of creative energy in our nation's competitive struggle for world leadership.

And finally, with a new contingent of 20 million educated and cultured first class citizens of color, we shall have righted the tragic wrongs of our fathers. And may I suggest that in our ideological efforts to attract the hungry citizens of this shrinking civilization, we will have a far more potent sales force to peddle our democratic product to a 3/4's dark-skinned world.

I think that this might prove a far finer solution than the thermo-nuclear destruction toward which we now appear to be drifting.

Can we agree that the free enterprise system which put John Glenn into orbit is capable of the free enterprise thinking which could help to liberate a distressed and fearful mankind from its primitive and inhuman past?